



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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Instruction Memorandum No. CA-2012-021
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To: All California District and Field Managers

From: State Director, California

Subject: Implementation Guidance for the Memorandum of Agreement on Interagency Relationships between the Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, the California State Association of Counties, and Regional Council of Rural Counties

Purpose: The purpose of this Instruction Memorandum (IM) is to provide guidance to California Bureau of Land Management District and Field Offices on implementing the “Memorandum of Agreement Among California, USDI Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, and the California State Association of Counties and Regional Council of Rural Counties, Representing California County Governing Bodies,” (MOA) signed on July 23, 2012.

Action: The US Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region (USFS), the Bureau of Land Management, California (BLM) and California counties share a long partnership in the management of federal public lands and national forests in California. On July 23, 2012, USFS, BLM, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and the Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC) entered into an MOA to help improve interagency relationships by facilitating early and frequent communication between defined federal agencies and counties to foster a more productive partnership that results in positive land management decisions for all parties. The MOA establishes a beginning point for individual counties and federal agencies to establish processes and norms that will enhance their communications and understanding of each other’s work.

The BLM will implement this MOA in the following ways:

- With this IM the State Director designates Field Managers as the contact for counties that have land within that Field Office. Counties wishing to participate in this MOA will contact the appropriate Field Manager. After the initial meeting between the county and the Field Manager, the Field Manager may delegate portions of this MOA to the appropriate staff.

- The MOA requires BLM to include interested counties in any planning processes to assure that the County's plans and policies are considered throughout the process. Field Offices should work with individual counties to determine the appropriate level of involvement based on the County's interests. "Planning processes" should be interpreted broadly to provide opportunities for involvement, and should not be limited to Resource Management Plan (RMP)-level actions.
- The MOA requires the BLM to request the participation of the County in any planning process before public scoping. Field Offices should continue to use the online NEPA log and website to announce public scoping opportunities; however, counties should be notified before public scoping is announced. This notification can be accomplished in many ways and Field Offices and Counties should determine the appropriate method for notification. Some Field Offices and Counties may choose to accomplish this through regular meetings, or through letters or email.
- The MOA requires the BLM to meet with the County Board of Supervisors at its request on an agreed upon time frame to update and confer with the County on upcoming programs, projects, and other matters of interest. The Field Office should work with interested counties to develop an agreed upon time frame. Fields Offices may consider the number of counties in their field office and level of activity.
- The District Managers are responsible for ensuring that Field Managers carry out this MOA and that Counties and the public are properly notified of NEPA and planning actions.

The MOA is intended to complement the BLM's obligation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to invite State and local agencies to participate in NEPA actions as Cooperating Agencies, and it's obligation under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) to coordinate with local governments. In many cases, this MOA may provide a framework for accomplishing these responsibilities. However, if a county does not elect to participate in this MOA, that does not relieve the BLM of its duties under FLPMA or NEPA.

In developing individual agreements with counties under this MOA, Field Offices should reference the BLM's *Desk Guide to Cooperating Agency Relationships and Coordination with Intergovernmental Partners* (transmitted in WO IM-2012-115, available online at: http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/Planning_and_Renewable_Resources/NEPS.Par.933.70.File.dat/BLM_DeskGuide_CA_Relationships.pdf) to avoid duplication of these efforts.

All questions regarding this IM may be addressed to Cynthia Staszak, Associate Deputy State Director, Resources, (916) 978-4649.

Signed by:
Angie Lara
Associate State Director

Authenticated by:
Richard A. Erickson
Records Management

Attachments - 2

1. Memorandum of Agreement Among California, USDI Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, and the California State Association of Counties and Regional Council of Rural Counties, Representing California County Governing Bodies (5 pp)
2. List of BLM Field Offices and Counties (1 p)